



80 PLAZA COURT, GROTON, CT 06340

Dear Co-Chairs Needleman and Arconti and ranking members Formica and Ferraro and other distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Frank Facchini. I am the Executive Director of Southeastern Connecticut Television and I am requesting your support of SB 278:

AN ACT REQUIRING MULTICHANNEL VIDEO PROGRAMMING DISTRIBUTORS TO PAY A COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAMMING FEE.

Southeastern Connecticut Television serves 14 towns, from Groton and Stonington, Waterford and East Lyme and up to the Quiet Corner, Killingly and Putnam. I have worked in Community Access Television for more than three decades as it has evolved technically from playing back VHS consumer videotapes, to DVDs, to electronic file formats, and now streaming over the internet.

Our studios have supported the production of community television programs from residents, organizations, schools, and town and state officials.

Additionally, we have covered events of importance to residents of Southeastern Connecticut that have brought attention to issues that receive little or no coverage from other media outlets.

We have worked with the Naval Submarine Base in Groton. which produced two different shows with us, “Military Neighbors” and “Undercurrents” to promote morale, welfare, and recreation information for members of the military as well as the surrounding communities.

When the Submarine Base was placed on a list for possible closure, we recorded and televised the Base Realignment and Closure Hearings to increase community support and awareness of its value to the region.

We worked with the League of Women Voters producing political debates and producing shows that discussed important issues up for votes.

We worked with the United States Census Bureau to provide information and encourage citizens to participate in the Census count.

Throughout the COVID pandemic we provided the community with information regarding testing, mask distribution, and vaccinations. We also made residents aware of businesses that were able to remain open during the pandemic.

Town governments rely on us to televise town meetings for years and since the pandemic, their reliance on us has grown with the use of Zoom to record meetings.

We work with local high schools publicizing and promoting their events, including sports, concerts, and theatre, as well as recording Board of Education meetings. And Grasso Technical School in Groton has produced shows which promote the advantages of a tech school education.

UConn Avery Point uses our equipment to record their Men's and Women's basketball games and televises them on our channels as well as Facebook and YouTube.

We work with countless institutions and organizations including the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce promoting non-profit organizations such as the Mystic Aquarium and the Mystic Seaport which in turn benefits many small businesses throughout Southeastern Connecticut.

Our funding is declining each year and without a change in the law, we and other independent Community Access Studios around the state will no longer exist.

We request that you support SB 278 so that we can continue to provide these vital services which allow everyone the means to produce meaningful Community Access Programs that help make our region and state a great place to live and work.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

Frank Facchini

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